

TowerTalk

News By and For the Park Tower Condominium Community

Governance

PT Reopens Cautiously

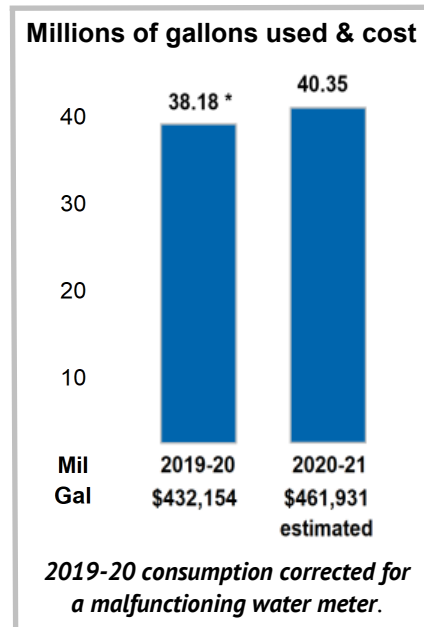
With the coronavirus pandemic still very much a reality in Chicago, Park Tower building policies/procedures continue to reflect board and management determination to keep our residents safe. Here is an abbreviated list.

- Face Coverings (masks) - Required 100% of the time, by 100% of our residents, throughout 100% of our common areas. By mid-summer, more than 30 residents had been fined. And as of August 15, no more warnings!
- Guests in any single unit limited to 5.
- Passengers per elevator limited to 4.
- 2nd floor Sundeck – Glass forbidden; no groups larger than 6; social distancing and face coverings required while not seated at a table; reasonable behavior expected of residents and their guests.
- Health Club – Reopening policies will always reflect current building and government requirements. HC Members can check for updates and sign out the required Key Cards at the Front Desk.
- Essential work orders only, and unit remodeling postponed unless explicitly allowed.
- No bikes, tricycles, scooters, etc in our commercial mall, hallways, lobby or other common areas (reminder).
- Association meetings and social events via Zoom.

As procedures and expected behaviors change, they are duly noted in **PT News & Updates** (typically, a weekly email from management) and on the home page of www.ptcondo.com. **TT**

Conservation

Water Consumption Inching Up / Costing More



After declining for several years, water consumption at Park Tower has started heading up again. Equally troubling, so is the cost which, thanks to the city's fees and taxes, continued to rise even when consumption was declining.

Now, with residents home so many more hours each day, it seems inevitable that we'll actually use more water than the 40.35 million gallons budgeted for the year.

Unless ..

Unless every one of us makes an honest to goodness effort to use less of it, remembering that more than 80% of the water consumed here at Park Tower flows directly from the taps of its residents. **TT**

See page 10 for a short list of highly doable ways we can all reduce the amount of water we use.

Governance

PT Budget & Projects

According to treasurer Jean Shamo, the coronavirus had resulted by early August in at least \$100,000 lost income to the association due mainly to reduced parking revenue from Lettuce Entertain You employees and Health Club memberships being extended. The good news is that there has been little if any drop off in payment of assessments. Owners appear to have been able, so far at least, to maintain this all-important long term investment.

Property manager Tim Patricio reports as follows on projects originally scheduled for this year. **Heat Exchanger Valve** (completed) .. **Gas Booster Pump** (underway) .. **Garage Membrane & Concrete** (underway) .. **Fan Coil Loop Pumps** (out for bid) .. **Low Rise Domestic Water Heaters** (to be bid soon) .. **Riser Continuation** (delayed until workers can safely enter units) .. **Pool Area Roof/Skylight** in tandem w/**Pool Walkway Roof/Gutters** (likely next year) .. **Driveway Resurfacing Asphalt** (awaiting 5445 OK, likely next year) .. **Passenger Elevator Cabs** (likely next year) .. **NE Masonry Flashing along Bike Room & Garage** (likely next year) .. **Domestic Cold Water Pump** (postponed) .. **Roof Lighting** (postponed) **TT**

To read **TowerTalk** online, Google **towertalk-sep-nov-2020**
The online edition is in color, with bold, underlined links to referenced online resources.

Interview with Habitat's David Barnhart

by Bob Shamo



Park Tower is managed by The Habitat Company, which in turn employs our management team and all PT's employees. Dave is V.P. of Condominium Management with Habitat.

Good afternoon, David. To get started, please describe your job as it relates to Park Tower and your relationship with our board and management.

I got to know property manager Tim Patricio about ten years ago when I worked for Draper & Kramer. Since then I've been personally involved in hiring and supervising your management team, which includes chief and assistant engineers. By the way, it's always been a pleasure, never a disappointment.

Over the years, that relationship has extended to the board of directors. We've pretty much seen eye to eye on what needs doing and how best to facilitate it. I'm actually proud for everyone that it's worked out, even with different personalities coming and going on the board.

Incidentally, in my current position at Habitat, I have regional managers who report to me. I don't normally attend the board meetings at their buildings unless my presence is needed. But I do continue to be personally involved with two of our properties – 400 East Randolph (Chicago's largest condominium building under one roof) and Park Tower. I spend time with Tim, attend staff meetings and your monthly board meetings. Not to worry, I'm your guy!

Tim has mentioned working with other property managers on a guide for getting Habitat associations back to normal as we emerge from the pandemic.

You're referring to the Return to Work Plan, Protocols & Practices. Tim is one of our most seasoned managers, with a very, very high skill level, and he writes well.

*So, yes, we wanted him in that working group. I'll be happy to share that manual online with your readers.**

Are there features of this building that have made dealing with it harder or easier?

Two come to mind. First, social distancing is more difficult in a tall slender building with a lot of elevator run. And second, because your Health Club is large and has members from two other buildings, it was tough to first close it down and then figure out how to open it back up in a safe, appropriate way.

Where in Chicago is the hottest market for condo resales?

It's all along the lakefront, from north of downtown all the way to South Shore. We're probably not setting any record high prices right now, but I'm also not seeing the weakening of sales I sort of expected due to the coronavirus. At Park Tower, there have been too few recent sales to confirm any trend up or down. It looks like both owners and renters have just hunkered down and decided this is not a great time to make a change.

Interestingly, there was buzz in real estate circles early on that residents would want to flee the city in the wake of Covid-19 – you know, get into their own little bubble of a single-family home. But that doesn't appear to be happening either, even though interest rates have been remarkably low for securing mortgages.

What features here at Park Tower stand out for the value they deliver to owners or tenants.

That's a pretty easy one to answer. First, your location is stellar, a very special place on the east side of Sheridan Road and adjacent to the park. Second, buyers, renters, and residents themselves are taken by the building's remarkable architecture. I consider it to be the finest building in Edgewater.

Third, the very large number of remodeled units speaks well for your owners' belief in the building. And yet, units of all sizes remain available for new, ambitious

owners. Management has done its part by keeping construction security deposits low.

Fourth, you have a full-amenity building with two levels of parking, Health Club including pool, a spanking new market and large package room, 24-hour doorman, laundry room and lockers for cleaning pickup. Consider also the commercial mall, occupied by the corporate offices of a major company and contributing to the budget in ways that lessen the cost otherwise accruing to the folks who live there.


On page 8 of this issue is a story on deconversion of condominium buildings – that is, selling the whole kit and kaboodle to a single buyer who then turns them into rental units.

I've never believed Park Tower would deconvert to rental. You are a highly successful condominium association because of the board's careful work with management over a long period of time. You have adequate reserves and you don't have deferred maintenance, which means you're not staring down a special assessment that's going to bankrupt residents. Now, with the the city's increase to 85% the percentage of ownership that would need to approve, it would be incredibly difficult for any large scale property to deconvert. I'm certainly not aware of any larger Chicago building considering it.

Two last questions, and I'll let you go. What are you enjoying most in your new position at The Habitat Company .. and what final words might you have for Park Tower?

I wasn't looking to leave Draper & Kramer, but when it discontinued its condominium management division, Habitat came calling. Habitat is totally team-oriented, with ethics of the highest order. There's just no one who's going to do the wrong thing or tolerate inappropriate behaviors.

*As for final words, just keep doing what you're already doing. Active committees add so much to residents' quality of life. And seek out board members whose personal interests take second place to those of the association as a whole. **TT***

* [Habitat Return to Work Plan Protocols & Practices \(5-21-2020\)](#) 

Committee Focus

Social Committee

by Sheldon Atovsky, chair

The Social Committee is adapting to the pandemic. Sadly, we had to cancel several events, most importantly our **Annual 4th of July Celebration**. However, we have had several occasions since to bring people together via Zoom.

A big “Thank You” to owner Dr. Paula Castillo for making several dozen soft, washable masks especially for our senior residents. These were doubly-appreciated coming in April, before masks were generally available.



Park Tower 2020 Annual Meeting Bingo

2 open Board positions	Attend Party Room in person?	Owners only!	Self-nominate?
No fractional votes	Proxy Box at Front Desk	Write-in candidates	20% Quorum
Attend via Zoom	1 vote per candidate, or 2 for one	Candidate resumes	1 proxy form for each unit owned
No onsite campaigning	Monday, June 8, 7:30 pm	Auditor certifies results	2-year terms

by:tradingcards.com

Early in June and again in July we produced online **Bingo** games. For the first, we made cards with words and phrases related to the election of new Board members, the main event at our June Annual Meeting.

We did the same in July but substituted words and phrases appropriate to the 4th of July. Both times we ended with a set of traditional number Bingo games. Game winners were Greg Nigosian, Laela Skaer, Bob Shamo and Tim Patricio.

We received an inspiring video from Shravya Kulkarni, a well-informed five year old who wanted to share her knowledge about Independence Day with other residents. If you're reading TowerTalk online, [click here](#) to check it out.

The committee sponsored **Another Conversation with Judge Martha Mills** on the evening of August 4. Martha, an advocate for Restorative Justice, had led us in a RJ circle last October in the Party Room. This time it was on Zoom, but just as effective. Thank you, Martha, for leading us in a meaningful discussion of our pandemic, ongoing social protests, and worthwhile actions we as citizens might consider taking in coming days.



Looking ahead to Wednesday evening, October 21, resident Pam Woll will lead a Zoom discussion on aging well at Park Tower: autonomy, community and purpose. Her thoughts are based on Atul Gawande's book, **Being Mortal: Illness, Medicine and What Matters in the End**. In preparation, do consider reading both the book and Pam's study outline, found online ([click here](#)) and soon to be made generally available.

You've noticed, I'm sure, our current reliance on Zoom, the same medium our association uses for board meetings, various committee meetings, town halls and resident forums. Goodness knows, we're eager to get back to social interaction, but for any who might still benefit, our committee continues its offer of a **Zoom primer**. Email me at s_atovsky@sbcglobal.net to set up a session or to have yourself added to our email notification list.

Finally, we note with appreciation the many notes and cards to Park Tower management, staff and security thanking them for their extra effort early in our pandemic. Most were done by hand, and some even included original poems and art. A tribute, indeed, and fittingly displayed in our Lobby for all to see.



Stay healthy, stay safe. And stay in touch, using my email address above, to alert the committee to any new ideas you might have for Social Committee events in these most unusual times. 📧 🌐

*Breaking news! Park Tower owners and tenants may now join us on Facebook, **Park Tower Condominium Association Social Committee**. (Online readers, [click here](#).)*



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Remember When

The Bombs Next Door - Nice Nuclear Neighbors

by Sue Burke



Crazy as it sounds, missiles stationed near Montrose Beach during the Cold War were armed with nuclear warheads. Even crazier, people seemed to think it was a good idea. This US Army "Family With a Future" decal anticipated a series of Nike missiles.

The missiles formed part of the Nike air defense system, one of 22 sites that ringed Chicago. These sites protected Chicago from Soviet aircraft flying over the North Pole and Canada to drop atomic bombs on the United States.

The Cold War was a time of international conflict that, for the most part, stopped short of violence. It began as World War II ended in 1945, leaving two major powers in the world: the United States versus the Soviet Union (USSR). The US already had atomic weapons, and the USSR exploded its first "A-bomb" in 1949.

The arms race was on, but neither side had long-range aircraft or missiles. As the Iron Curtain fell across Europe in 1946 and the Berlin Crisis sparked an airlift to the western half of the divided city in 1948-49, each side desperately researched improved weaponry.

In 1953, the US Army and Bell Labs implemented an anti-aircraft surface-to-air missile system called Nike Ajax. The missiles had a revolutionary two-stage engine with a maximum speed of 1000 miles per hour and a reach of 25 miles, far beyond conventional artillery. The computer-controlled Nike radar system identified the target, locked on its path, and guided the missile in the air.

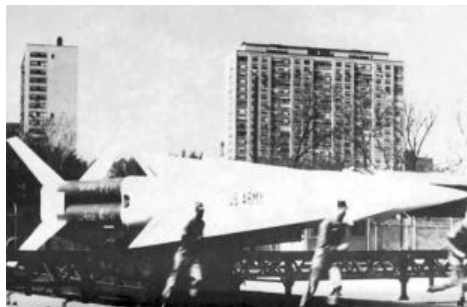
Soon, about 300 Ajax launch sites were built to guard strategic locations. "Chicago has become the best-defended city in the Middle West against enemy air-to-ground attacks," declared the *Chicago Sun Times* in 1960.

Most of the city's 22 sites were at its fringes, including in Indiana, but the lakefront had to be defended, too. Sites opened in Burnham Park, Jackson Park, and Lincoln Park.

The Lincoln Park site, operational from 1955 to 1965, was typical. An underground magazine of four missiles was installed just north of Belmont Harbor, where a patch of grass grows now. The radar and computers were housed in a building just south of Montrose Beach, where a restaurant operates now.



A Nike Ajax missile in firing position at Montrose Beach in 1956.



A nuclear-capable Nike Hercules missile and its crew at the Montrose Beach site in 1959.

The sites opened to praise from the *Chicago American* newspaper. "The thing you ought to remember is that the Nike's presence hereabouts should enable you to sleep a lot more soundly." The missiles, it said, "make nice neighbors."

Meanwhile, the Cold War kept heating up. As both sides improved their weapons, Americans began to build fallout shelters and create Civil Defense Systems with hopes of surviving a nuclear war. The Korean War from 1950-53 tested the limits of the Cold War.

Then in 1957, the USSR launched Sputnik, the first satellite to orbit the Earth. The space race was on, and the US lagged behind in missile technology.

In 1958, the Army replaced Ajax with Hercules missiles and nuclear warheads. The missiles had a range of 100 miles, a top speed of 3000 miles per hour, and greater accuracy. The warhead could destroy ballistic missiles as well as several aircraft at once.

The Cold War remained tense. In August 1961, the Berlin Wall was built.

Not everyone liked living with the threat of sudden annihilation, and in November 1961, the first US Women's Strike for Peace inaugurated the slogan, "End the Arms Race, Not the Human Race."

In 1962, John Glenn became the first American to orbit the Earth. Later that year, the US discovered USSR missiles armed with nuclear weapons in Cuba, and the crisis almost sparked a nuclear war. That led to the 1963 Test Ban Treaty that prohibited the testing of nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, which had been spreading around a lot of radioactivity.


But as a consequence of the space race, missile technology improved. Soon the USSR and the US could launch intercontinental ballistic missiles carrying nuclear warheads, and the Nike sites became obsolete. In 1965, the site at Montrose Beach and Belmont Harbor returned to park use, as did nine of the other sites around Chicagoland.

Eventually, the Cold War became history. Now Montrose Beach hosts the joys of nature and piping plover nests – but we still live in crazy times. **TWT**



The signs that marked locations where we would (supposedly) be safe during a nuclear war.

Sue, a Park Tower resident, is a science fiction author and frequent contributor to TowerTalk.

Read more about the Nike missiles online at [Chicago Uptown History](#) and [Ed Thelen's Nike Missile Web Site](#) 

Elegant 06 Corner Unit Bathrooms

by Bob Shamo

This young couple lived downtown on North Michigan Avenue until recently. Needing more space, and wanting to own their own home, they found their way to Park Tower and last year moved into this mid-level 06 tier unit. These handsome bathrooms are the first rooms to be remodeled. Design was by the owner, and a contractor who lives here in the building did the construction and installation.



Vanities in both baths are glossy white and fitted with speckled quartz counters. Atop the vanities are three mirrors, the center ones opening to reveal medicine cabinets. And, very cool, the makeup mirror in the master bath lights up as the user approaches it.

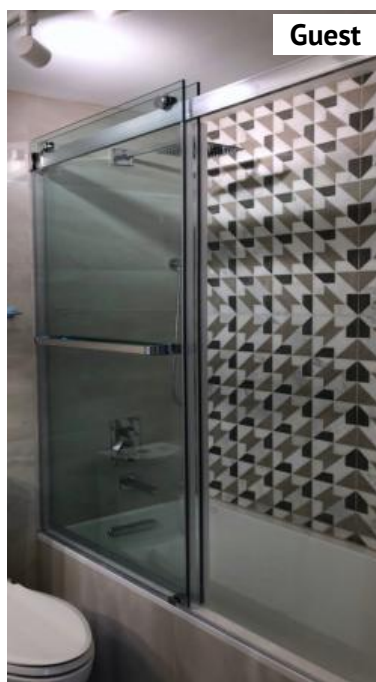
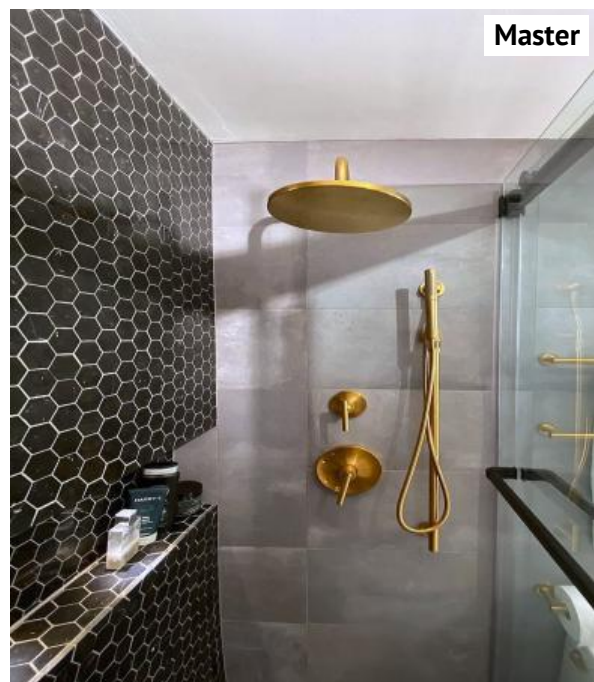
Under-cab lighting is installed on the vanity bottoms, illuminating floors and contours at night. Cannister ceiling lights, towel bars and shower fittings in the master bath are metallic gold, and in the guest bath shiny chrome.

In the guest bath, sliding shower doors sit atop a new square-cut, deep acrylic tub. The shower wall is made of rectangular tiles patterned so as to



Porcelain tiles are used to great effect in both baths. Charcoal color in one, a lighter and variegated gray in the other, they clad both the walls and the floors, making for a sleek and seamless appearance. **

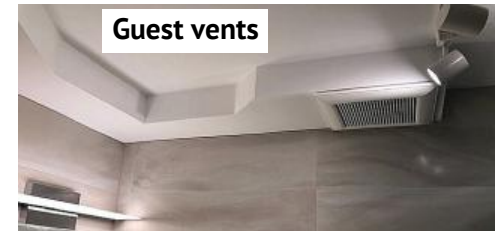
In the master bath, a walk-in shower with glass doors replaces the tub. The shower wall is made of small black hexagonal tiles and features a full-length recessed, illuminated shelf.



suggest a shower spray. In both baths, the tub-shower wall is completed with a narrow column of glass shelves attractively mounted floor-to-ceiling.



In both bathrooms, the louvered vents (pictured below) to exhaust stale air are repositioned to be over locations where they will do the most good!



Those vents, further upgraded with small exhaust fans, are mounted flat on the underside of shallow soffits that lead back to their original locations and connect with the building's exhaust ductwork. The system is more efficient now and the soffits add interest to out of the way spaces.

As our visit ended, I noticed how the rectangular hallway closet has been repurposed. A Bosch washer and dryer now sit on one side in that space, and next to them (not pictured) a linen closet fronted by a handsome dark veneer door. Simple but elegant.



Great job! I'm sure the entire unit will soon reflect the same careful design, selection of materials and workmanship.

*** Best to order extra tiles for unexpected behind-the-wall plumbing repairs.*

Questions about these bathrooms, including information about the contractor, can be addressed to bobshamo@rcn.com for forwarding on to the owners.

The Story of my Marriage

by Rachita Gupta



Hi, my name is Rachita. I'm from India but moved to the USA with my husband last year. We came directly to Chicago and are enjoying so much living here at Park Tower.

Some of my new acquaintances seem interested in knowing more about Indian culture and traditions, particularly the colorful Indian weddings, rituals and celebrations. So, if I may, I'll use my own wedding story to illustrate. Here we go!

My husband is Mr. Rahul Gupta. Both he and I were born and raised in New Delhi, the capital city of India. We worked there too, I in advertising and he as a software engineer. At the time of our marriage I was 24 and Rahul was 27.

What you call extended families are "joint families" in India. Before marrying, Rahul and I lived with our respective parents, grandparents, brother, sister and their families – all in same house! Like most Indians, our religion is Hindu. But traditions, language, food, and culture vary from region to region. Ours was a North Indian Hindu wedding.

The Meeting

Yes, you will all want to know – ours was an arranged marriage. My father met Rahul and his family through a mutual friend. After getting to know them a little, and asking some probing questions, he arranged for the two families to meet on a Sunday morning in late January, 2017.

That was Rahul's and my first meeting, too, and we spoke privately in a corner for 10 or 15 minutes. Though nervous, we exchanged pleasantries and managed to ask some general questions about life goals, hobbies, and so forth. All went well. We agreed to marry, and our families exchanged sweets and gifts.

Here are the ceremonies and rituals that, taken together, comprised our wedding.

The Roka Ceremony

The word "roka" means to stop. This ceremony is to officially let family and friends know that the search has stopped, that we've found our suitable partners. A highlight is the groom's mother giving to the future bride a piece of heirloom jewelry as a sign of acceptance into her family.

The Engagement or Ring Ceremony

Unlike in Western traditions, the exchange of rings is done in an engagement function prior to marriage. Another tradition – having the couple's wedding day clothes and jewelry gifted by their respective in-laws – also took place that day. It was a spectacular event attended by more than 350 guests, with choreographed performances by Rahul, myself, our parents, siblings and other family members.



The Haldi and Mehendi Ceremonies

Hindu weddings generally occur shortly after engagement. Ours was in early May, 2017. The day before our wedding ceremony, haldi – a yellow turmeric powder that also beautifies – was applied to my face, hands and feet by the married women in my family, along with yogurt to make my hair smooth and silky. The whole while they sang songs to bring good fortune. A big festive event also occurred at Rahul's home, both with dancing and much good cheer.



In a separate, intimate ritual the same day, beautiful and intricate Mehendi designs were applied to my hands and feet using henna, a rich, red-brown stain. Henna has cultural and traditional importance in India, with special significance to married women.

The Bhaat Ceremony

On the morning of the wedding, my maternal uncle brought gifts, sweets and jewelry for Rahul and me, showing love for his niece and new nephew.

The Wedding Ceremony

A Hindu wedding starts in the evening and continues through the next morning. It begins with a **Baraat**, the groom arriving by horse or carriage and accompanied by his family and friends. This is done with great pomp, including a band, dancing and fireworks.

The groom's party is welcomed by the bride's mother. There follow a series of small but meaningful rituals, the first of which is the **Aarti** in which light from wicks soaked in purified butter is offered to the deities. A wedding feast is then served to the entire gathering which, in our case, numbered nearly 500.

Next comes the **Kanyadaan** ritual at which the bride's father presents his daughter to the groom, entrusting him with her future well-being.

Sometime after midnight, the couple is seated in front of a sacred fire where, in the presence of their families, they perform the **Saat Pheras** ritual, or seven vows that signify their union for seven lives. This essential commitment is then validated by the priest, who ties them together with a sacred knot.

The groom then applies sindoor, a bright red cosmetic, to the bride's face. It can be elaborate or just a red dot on the forehead. Either way, it is a token of their marriage and shows the world that she is a married woman.

The wedding ceremony is now complete, but departing is also special. In the **Vidaai** ritual, the bride takes leave – usually tearfully – to live with her new husband at the home of her in-laws. In so doing, she tosses rice over her shoulders to thank her parents for their loving care. **(Continued next page)**



Then, in the **Griha Pravesh** ritual, she is welcomed into her new home by her mother-in-law and other women, this amid traditions such as games by which family members get to know one another.

Yes, there was a honeymoon. A few days later, we flew to Greece, a beautiful country that we had never before visited.



As I mentioned at the beginning, Rahul works in software engineering. His company, headquartered in New Delhi, has offices in other countries, and last year he was fortunate enough to be posted to Chicago. While that meant I had to give up my job in advertising, I am thrilled to be here with him.

Time will tell what comes next for us, but for sure our marriage was a life-altering event. In our current home away from home, we participate in Social Committee events and look forward to meeting even more of our new neighbors. **TTT**

Questions and comments sent to bobshamo@rcn.com will be forwarded to Rachita.

Going Green

More Than Some, Less Than Others

Park Tower's waste removal contractor, Republic Services, reports on a year-to-date basis how much of our waste was recyclable and how much had to go to landfill. As of June, our waste so far this year totaled 211 tons, with just 27 tons of it recyclable. Divide the smaller number by the larger one, and you get just under 13% of our waste having been recycled and, hopefully, repurposed into newly-manufactured products.



13% looks pretty good compared with Chicago as a whole, which this summer is recycling just 8% of residential waste (WBEZ podcase, [Curious City](#)). But then, the same source reports that in San Francisco, where recycling and composting is mandatory, that number is 80%! **TTT**

Read page 10 for more on Going Green. And online readers, click [here](#) to see Republic's estimate of how many trees; gallons of oil, gasoline and water; kilowatts of electricity; and yards of landfill were saved by Park Tower's 27 tons (13%) of recyclables.

From Our Readers

Just What You (May) Need

Ever have a lamp in a hard-to-reach location? Or perhaps a virtually unreachable router/modem that sometimes needs to be rebooted? Here are two variations on a theme – extension cords with remote switches “in-line” between the plug and the socket.



Var 1 (left) is for when the wall outlet is within reach but the appliance is not, and Var 2 for when both the outlet and the appliance are inaccessible. With either type, the switch can be pulled to a comfortable location for activating by foot (Var 1) or by hand (Var 2). **TTT**

Thanks, Jim Jardine, for this solution.

Oh yes, that 2020 Census Form ..

Have you mailed yours in? Everyone living in the United States is required to by law to be counted by September 30 (that deadline having been extended due to the coronavirus).



The information requested is so important. It will provide the data that determines for the next 10 years how voting districts are drawn, the number of legislators representing us in congress, and how tax dollars will be distributed to states and cities.

If you don't remember receiving the form, or mislaid it, go to [2020Census.gov](https://www.census.gov) and fill out another one. Not to worry, duplicates will be discarded. “Uncle Sam” needs you! Than **TTT** several readers who suggested we include this reminder.



Convert Our Condos Back to Rentals?

by Sheldon Atovsky



Deconversion is selling an entire condominium building to a third party who will then turn its units into rental apartments.

Chicago law was recently amended to require that owners representing 85% of ownership in that condo association approve such a sale.

Interestingly, Park Tower started out in 1973 as a rental building. We converted to condominium status in 1979 amid a surge of national interest in home ownership.

The current interest in deconverting condos back into apartments started with the 2008 financial crisis. By that time,

rental buildings had decreased in number and rental prices had gone up. Some owners, particularly if they did not themselves live in the building, desperately wanted to ditch those mortgages and cash out. Builders, in the meantime, were taking a look at how much cheaper it is to remodel than to build new apartments from the ground up.

Frank Muldowney, a Park Tower resident and long-time instructor at the Chicago Real Estate School, boils down the appeal deconversion has to developers of properties from Old Town to Lakeview:

“Location, Location, Location. Demand for rental housing in these neighbor-hoods is strong; land prices for new construction are high, with few sites large enough to generate the desired return; and older condo buildings are available.”

Here are a few recent Chicago deconversions: 268-unit Kennelly Square at 1749 N Wells; 292-unit Century Tower at 182 W Lake; and the 449-unit River City complex at 800 S Wells.

Deconversion transactions are complex, with unanticipated financial problems and legal difficulties. The higher 85% ownership approval is almost certain to stir emotions (although that is sometimes ameliorated by prior agreement allowing owners to then lease back the units they’re currently living in). It would have to be seen as a very good deal by a large majority of condo owners and, in the end, the agreed upon sales price has to come through. Not for the faint of heart! **TT**

Sheldon is a Newsletter Committee member. Habitat V.P. David Barnhart discusses deconversion in his interview on page 2 of this issue.

Welcome Aboard

Hiker, Patricia Walker

by Jeff Hauser

Residents who park in the building will likely recognize Patricia, who joined our garage staff as a hiker (ie, car parker) late last year. I’ve gotten to know Patricia since then, and she has graciously allowed me to write a bit about her.



She grew up on Chicago’s South Side, the second oldest of five kids and the only girl. Among her fondest memories are bouncing along in the truck her dad drove, then learning to drive herself at age 14. From her mother, Patricia learned

parenting skills sufficient to raise the four children she takes such pride in today.

Patricia’s two sons served in the military, with one then becoming a barber and the other a truck driver. Her daughter by birth is a beautician. And there is a second daughter, too, adopted by Patricia after her own children were grown and out on their own.

Dajyne, the adopted daughter, was found to have sickle cell anemia, and caring for her required Patricia to be a full time mother for seven years. She values that experience and takes huge satisfaction in Dajyne’s having now completed two years of college and established herself on Instagram as a makeup artist.

Cubs fans will be interested to learn that Patricia worked at Wrigley Field for 15 years, in custodial services and as a cashier. And she shares an infectious personality with another of our hikers, William Whooper.

As William himself put it to me, “I taught her everything she needed to know!”

Patricia still enjoys cars, the daily routine of her work, and especially the warmth with which our residents greet her. Which isn’t surprising when you return from work to a smile like hers. **TT**

Jeff is a Newsletter Committee member.

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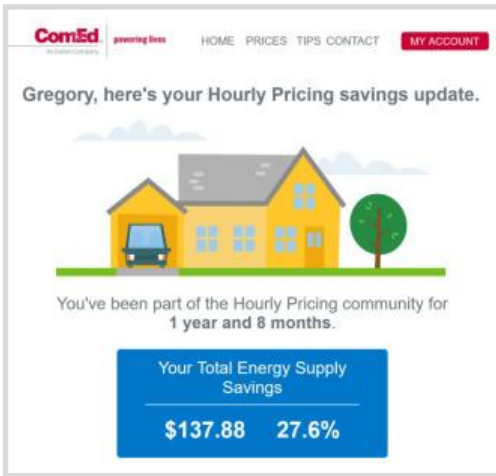


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Save with Smart Meters



Greg, a Park Tower resident, is enrolled in the Hourly Pricing Program (HPP) facilitated by ComEd's installation of "smart meters" in our building a few years ago. An alternative to fixed-price billing, hourly pricing allows ComEd to pass along to customers the lower prices it pays to buy electricity at less-than-peak usage hours. The savings per kilowatt hour is minuscule, but those pennies add up if tasks like dish and clothes washing can be scheduled for low or off-peak hours (weekends in general, or weekdays mid-morning or mid-afternoon).

ComEd recommends the program to customers whose electric bills are greater than \$50 a month. Typically, participants save about 15% over the standard fixed-price rate per kilowatt hour. **TT**

Composting at PT



You may have noticed these green disposal bins in our Dock area, tucked behind the recycling dumpsters. They may be used by residents who subscribe to Blockbins.com, a Chicago-based composting service. Rates start at \$10 a month for compostable waste, which is treated at a facility here in Chicago and sold to landscapers and municipalities to create green spaces.

Composting is not offered by our building's primary recycler; garbage tossed down the chutes goes to landfill. Blockbins is a green alternative, but it requires a core group of subscribers to assure its continuation at PT. **TT**

Read on page 8 of the Mar-May issue how Blockbins arrived at Park Tower.

Save Water - 10 Tips

1. Rinse produce in a bowl of water instead of under running water.
2. Turn off the water when brushing your teeth, sudsing/washing your hands, and while shaving.
3. Reuse water, once it's cooled after boiling vegetables or pasta, to water your plants.
4. Keep a pitcher of water in the fridge to enjoy cool water rather than running the faucet for each glass.
5. Run the dishwasher only when full; use one glass or one cup per day if you are drinking or refilling water.
6. Flush the toilet less. Don't use it to toss away a tissue; each flush uses 5 to 7 gallons.
7. Soak dirty pots and pans in the sink rather than using the force of flowing of water to rinse them off.
8. Turn off all faucets completely after each use.
9. Thaw foods overnight in the fridge for use the next day rather than under running water just before their use.
10. Alert maintenance to fix any leaking toilet or faucet. **TT**

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The image shows the GOgrocer logo, which consists of the word "GOgrocer" in a green, stylized font. Below the logo, it says "Located in the Park Tower Mall" and "Open every day, 8:00 am to 9:00 pm". At the bottom, there is a yellow box with an illustration of a coffee cup, a fork, and a cookie, with the text "we are open LE CAFÉ" and "daily hours 8-3". Below that, it says "INSIDE GO GROCER @PARK TOWER & @IMPERIAL TOWERS".

Weekly News & Updates, Text Messaging, Website

As described on the facing page, **TowerTalk** is assembled by the Newsletter Committee and blends news of the building, its residents, and the Edgewater community. Other building communications are directed by management and include postings on bulletin boards, content on TV channels 195/196, and occasional door-drops. Since the beginning of the pandemic, “subscriptions to/registrations for/clicks on” the three digital media mentioned below have shown them to be especially popular with residents. To subscribe or register for any of them, inquire at the management office.

Weekly News & Updates is delivered as an email to about 500 subscribers, usually on Fridays, and highlights building issues and community concerns. Each item is introduced by an attention-grabbing graphic. Brief explanations are then linked as necessary to more complete discussions on the website.

Text Messaging sends specific digital alerts to owners/residents who sign up to be informed of emergencies, maintenance issues, and/or routine events such as meetings. The record high of 560 subscribers was likely driven by recent street disturbances.

www.PTCondo.com is the repository for an enormous amount of data, and it gets about ??? clicks per **day/week/month**. Residents who register their identities may login to gain access to restricted information such as our governing documents, annual budgets, and minutes from board meetings.

Useful Forms & Documents is a particularly useful section of the website and can be found on its Library page. When all you need is a quick look, view them online and save yourself a trip to the management office.

Owners & All Residents

- Additional Occupant Registration Form
- Bike Room Registration Sheet
- Board Meeting Recording Policy
- Dispute Resolution Policy & Complaint Form
- Complaint Form
- Resident Emergency Procedures
- City Of Chicago CALM Emergency Procedure
- PTCA Fee Schedule
- Permission to Enter Form
- Party Room Rules Packet
- Recycling Guidelines
- Riser Replacement Calendar
- PTCA Rules Handbook

Owners

- Amendment Signature
- PTCA Certificate of Insurance
- Construction & Remodeling Packet
- Unit Sales Packet
- Reserve Study Update

Landlords & Tenants

- Lease Packet
- Broker/Lender/Appraisal Information Sheet
- PTCA Leasing Policy
- Owner Rental Wait List Form

Garage, Parking, Special Use

- Monthly Parking License Agreement
- Guest Parking Rates
- Current Garage Waiting List
- Motorized Vehicle Policy

Health Club

- PTCA Health Club Agreement Blgs 5445 & 5455
- PTCA Health Club Agreement (Park Tower)

TTT

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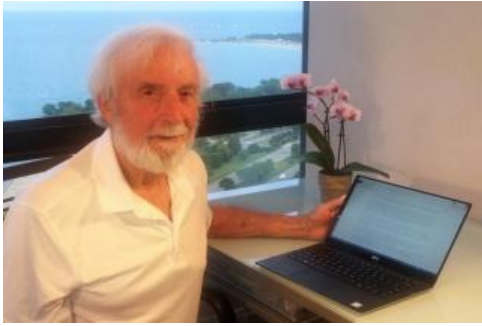
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AVEDA

Newsletter Committee & TowerTalk

by Bob Shamo, chair



In this Newsletter Committee report, I'll talk first about how **TowerTalk** is planned, written and produced, then about how I see it positioned in a building so well served by digital media.

The earliest **Park Tower News** we have dates from 1979. By whatever name, our newsletter has always blended news of the building, its residents, and the Edgewater community.

Stories nowadays are written by three committee members, an author who is not on the committee, and occasional but important pieces by management, board members and guests.

The most fun for me personally have been the human interest stories like the *Recently Rehabbed* columns featuring innovative unit renovations, and *Park Tower Profiles* highlighting a few of our many interesting residents.

While there is some duplication of material from the website, most newsletter material is original. Take for instance our annual year-end charting of PT sales and lease prices; Tim Patricio's recent series on budget preparation; and the three *Condo Ownership Today* stories that wrap in this issue .

The committee works from an online Google Sheets storyboard. Any idea can be listed, to be picked up later by an interested writer, assigned to a forthcoming issue, and then tracked through completion.

Four to six ads are usually sufficient to offset production costs.

The committee meets once per quarter to plan issues for Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. The copy due-date is one month prior to publication, allowing about three weeks for editing and layout in Microsoft Publisher.

A fourth week is saved for printing in black/white by the management office. It is then door-dropped to our 700+ residential units, while a color edition is uploaded to the website with live links to related resources. All issues since 2012 are on the website's Library page.

With the publication of this issue, I'll be leaving the Newsletter Committee after nine years, the last five as chair, editor and layout person. TowerTalk has been a labor of love and a chapter of my life that would never have happened had Jean and I not found our way to Park Tower.

But looking ahead, I'm realistic. Our association's needs are exceedingly well-served by www.PTcondo.com, Weekly News & Updates, and SMS messaging. These digital media can be spontaneous, flexible, edited on the fly, and even accessed on multiple devices.

Is TowerTalk still worth the effort? Yes, I think so, if done well and read by most residents. We've had some interesting suggestions: shorter and less ambitious; publish less often; online only with webpage instead of newsletter formatting.

In my nine years on the Newsletter Committee, we have always tried to make TowerTalk reflect the high quality of the building and the people who live and work here. If you have ideas for simplifying its production or increasing readership, please let me, the Board, or Management know. **TT**

Bob can be reached at (773) 413.9456
or at bobshamo@rcn.com



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Building Contacts

Office	773-769-3250
Fax	773-769-0047
Doorman	773-769-3083
Garage	773-271-8859
Health Club	773-769-1513
RCN Service & Billing	312-955-2500

Park Tower website
www.ptcondo.com

Mall/Business Contacts

Go Grocer & Le Café
 Suite 114 773-944-1414

Dralyuk Real Estate
 Suite 103A 773-275-8520

Lettuce Entertain You
 (Gift Certificate purchases)
 Suite 105 773-924-4438

Park Tower Management Office
parktowercondo-mgmt@habitat.com
 Suite 107 773-769-3250

Elizabeth Todorovic, Attorney
 (Real Estate)
 Suite 110 773-271-2110

Stephen J. Feldman, Attorney
 (Criminal & DUI Defense)
 Suite 113 312-371-5522

Roger Philip Feldman & Co. CPA
 Suite 113 773-944-0664

Dates to Remember

* Open to Owners only and may be canceled if no agenda ‡ Social Event

* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	via Zoom	Sep 14
New Resident Meeting	7:00 pm	via Zoom	Sep 16
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	via Zoom	Sep 28
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	via Zoom	Oct 12
‡ Aging Well at Park Tower	7:00 pm	via Zoom	Oct 21
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	via Zoom	Oct 26
Resident Forum	7:00 pm	via Zoom	Oct 27
* Board w/Budget & Finance Committee	9:00 am	via Zoom	Nov 7
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	via Zoom	Nov 9
* Board w/Budget & Finance Committee	9:00 am	via Zoom	Nov 14
* Board w/Budget & Finance Committee	9:00 am	via Zoom	Nov 21
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	via Zoom	Nov 23
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	via Zoom	Dec 14
* Board of Directors Meeting	7:30 pm	via Zoom	Dec 28
Garage Project, Phase 2	9:00 am	(as posted)	Sep 1
Garage Project, Phase 3	9:00 am	(as posted)	Oct 1
Garage Project, Phase 4	9:00 am	(as posted)	Nov 2

Management Office Hours

Mondays & Fridays	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays	8:00 am - 6:00 pm

Thanksgiving Holiday Schedule

Management Office will be closed at 3:00 pm Wed, Nov 25;
closed all day Thu, Nov 26; and open Fri, Nov 27 from 9:00 am 'til 3:00 pm

Contributing to TowerTalk

* Newsletter Committee Members

* Sheldon Atovsky	Rachita Gupta	** Cheryl Ronnett (Board liaison)
David Barnhart	* Jeff Hauser	* Bob Shamo (retiring editor)
Sue Burke	Tim Patricio	

Occasionally, we invite a resident to write on a subject we know is familiar to him or her. If you think you'd like to write a story – or suggest an idea for someone else to write – please email us at bobshamo@rcn.com

TowerTalk is published four times a year (Sep-Nov, Dec-Feb, Mar-May, Jun-Aug) and delivered in black and white to Park Tower's 700+ residential units. Stories are also posted in full color at www.ptcondo.com Currently we're accepting photo ready business card, quarter-page, and third-page ads for the Dec-Feb, 2020/21 issue. To inquire, email bobshamo@rcn.com

BusCrd (\$40) = 2-1/2" tall & 3-3/4" wide **Quarter-page (\$75)** = 5" tall & 3-3/4" wide
Third-page (\$125) = 3-1/4 tall & 7-7/8" wide